



Air Quality affects us all, but Hoosiers who have lung disease, asthma, or difficulty breathing find changes in air quality critical to daily life. These sensitive groups need a way to plan their daily activities based on what the air quality is. That is where SmogWatch comes in.

SmogWatch gives you easy access to daily air quality forecasts for your region of the state. Based on existing conditions and current weather patterns, IDEM's meteorologists forecast the air quality. Information about the air quality, ground-level ozone and particulate matter is then posted on SmogWatch.

Check out the daily air quality forecast at:

www.smogwatch.IN.gov
or **1-800-631-2871**.



**SMOG
WATCH**

For more information:

**Indiana Department
of Environmental
Management**

100 North Senate Avenue
MC 61-50 IGCN 1003
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2251

www.smogwatch.IN.gov

Toll-free: (800) 631-2871

Local: (317) 233-2318

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**INDIANA DEPARTMENT
OF ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT**

**SMOG
WATCH**

**Be
Air Aware
and
Part of the
Solution
to
Pollution**

www.smogwatch.IN.gov

What is SmogWatch?

SmogWatch is an information tool created by IDEM to share air quality forecasts for each day. It is available through a Web site at www.smogwatch.IN.gov and a toll-free number at (800) 631-2871. You can also sign up to receive e-mail forecasts* when an Air Quality Action Day (AQAD) is called. SmogWatch provides daily air quality forecasts, health information, and monitoring data for seven regions of the state.

***To sign up for e-mail forecasts go to www.smogwatch.IN.gov, click on the map in the region of the state you live and scroll down to the heading "Sources of Additional Information." Click on e-mail notice and then fill in the information requested.**

What is Ozone?

The phrase "Good up high; bad nearby" makes it easy to remember what kind of ozone is good or bad. Ozone occurs naturally up high in the atmosphere in the area known as the stratosphere. There, it protects us from harmful ultra violet radiation created by the sun.

How is ozone harmful?

Nearby, at ground level, or the troposphere, ozone poses a health hazard. Ground-level ozone is formed when nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) emitted from motor vehicles and other engines, industrial plants, and other activities "cook" in the hot summer sun. Sunlight and hot weather cause ground-level ozone to form in harmful concentrations in the air. Ozone has the same chemical makeup whether it is up high or at ground level. Remember, "good up high; bad nearby."

What are fine particles?

Fine particles are particulate matter 2.5 microns or smaller in size (less than the diameter of a human hair) in the air. Fine particles can be natural (pollen, spores, dust) or man made from open burning, industry emissions and motor vehicle emissions. Some particles are large or dark enough to be seen such as soot or smoke, while others are so small that they can only be detected with an electron microscope. Fine particles can be suspended in the air for long periods of time, depending on the weather.

What are the health effects of ozone and fine particles?

Breathing ground-level ozone and fine particles has been linked to a series of significant health problems including: aggravated asthma; increases in respiratory symptoms like wheezing and coughing; chronic bronchitis; and, decreased lung function. Fine particles have also been linked to premature death. Even at low levels, ground-level ozone and fine particles can trigger a variety of health problems. Hoosiers most at risk are older adults, children and those with respiratory problems such as asthma. Even healthy people who are active outdoors can be affected when ozone and fine particulate matter levels are high.

What is an Air Quality Action Day?

AQAD's are IDEM's way of letting you know the air quality is not healthy for sensitive groups and we need you to take action to help make the air cleaner. Each day, air quality data is collected from air monitoring stations throughout the state. When data indicates that conditions are right for unhealthy levels of ground-level ozone or fine particles, an AQAD is called. AQAD advisories offer information about potential health impacts and tips for reducing ozone and fine particles. IDEM will issue an advisory to various media sources who broadcast and report the AQAD levels via TV, radio and newspapers. By making small changes in your daily routine, you can make a difference and help reduce ground-level ozone and fine particles in your community.

How do I find out about Air Quality Action Days?

The best way to learn about AQADs is through IDEM's SmogWatch Web site at www.smogwatch.IN.gov, by phone (800) 631-2871, or through the SmogWatch e-mail list. To sign up for the email list, visit the SmogWatch Web Site. IDEM makes every effort to alert Hoosiers if their community will be experiencing decreased air quality that could put sensitive groups at risk.

Your actions count!

How you can help reduce ozone and fine particles.

Air pollution is a problem for all of us, but each one of us can be a part of the solution. The choices we make every day can decrease air emissions and help protect our health. We have the power to change our homes, our transportation, and consumer habits in ways that reduce air emissions. Below is a list of simple, voluntary actions and ways to help you do your part to reduce ozone and fine particles.

On the go:

- Keep your vehicle engine tuned and well maintained.
- Refuel your car after 7 p.m. Gasoline vapors and engine exhaust help create ground-level ozone.
- Avoid spilling gas and don't "top off" the tank.
- Replace your gas tank cap tightly.
- Accelerate gradually, maintain the speed limit, and use cruise control on the highway.

At work:

- Take advantage of ride-share or carpooling programs.
- Work a flexible schedule and commute during non-peak driving times.
- Telecommute if possible.
- Buy energy-efficient computers and lighting.
- Turn off equipment and lights when not in use.
- Pack a lunch and eat in or walk to lunch.
- Keep fleet vehicles well maintained.

At home:

- Keep air conditioning and refrigeration systems well maintained.
- Check furnace filters monthly.
- Insulate your home, water heater and pipes.
- Conserve energy by setting your thermostat higher in the summer and lower in the winter.
- Keep woodstoves and fire places well maintained.
- Plant deciduous trees to provide shade in the

drive-inru lanes.

- Keep tires properly inflated.
- Carpool, use public transit, walk or ride a bike.
- Drive a vehicle that gets higher gas mileage (35 mpg and above).
- Drive an alternative or flexible fuel vehicle.
- Combine your errands into one trip and park centrally, walking as much as possible.



- Adopt office-wide pollution prevention methods.
- Recycle as many items as possible.
- Buy new products that have less packaging and are reusable.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.



in the winter.

- Don't burn leaves and yard waste. Compost or mulch instead.
- Keep household paints, solvents, and pesticides in air tight containers. Vapors can contribute to ground-level ozone.
- Mow your lawn less frequently and mow after 7 p.m. on Air Quality Action Days.
- Use electric-powered lawn equipment instead of gasoline-powered equipment.
- Replace your traditional portable fuel container with a ventless container.



**For more information, ideas and tips,
visit [www. smogwatch.IN.gov](http://www.smogwatch.IN.gov)**